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The Role of Atrocity Prevention and Responsibility to Protect in Development Cooperation

Workshop Report

I. Introduction

On 22-23 March 2016, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and USAID, assisted by the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect, convened a workshop entitled *The Role of Atrocity Prevention and Responsibility to Protect in Development Cooperation*. The event, held in Kampala, Uganda, brought together development practitioners, government representatives and civil society actors from throughout East Africa working in a range of sectors including human rights, development, and atrocity prevention.¹

This workshop, the first of its kind to focus on the operational relationship between development cooperation and atrocity prevention, was convened to achieve the following:

- a) increase the understanding of Responsibility to Protect (R2P) and atrocity prevention amongst the development community;
- b) identify the links between development cooperation and atrocity prevention
- c) introduce tools for early warning regarding R2P/atrocity prevention and highlight their relevance for development cooperation;
- d) discuss if/how development practitioners can further embed an “R2P/atrocity prevention lens” within their existing work; and
- e) identify and strategize on practical examples of how development cooperation policies and projects can help to address risk factors relevant for atrocity crimes²

Participants shared their knowledge and experiences, as well as discussed challenges, opportunities, and concrete actions that can be undertaken by development practitioners to contribute towards atrocity prevention and response.

¹ Workshop participants worked in the following countries: Burundi; Ethiopia; Kenya; Rwanda; Somalia; South Sudan; Tanzania; and Uganda. In addition, the organizers welcomed participants from Australia, Germany, Ghana and UNDP. The meeting was held under *Chatham House rules* so nothing in this report can or should be attributed to individual participants.

² This report will use the phrase “atrocity crimes” as short form for the crimes covered by R2P, i.e. genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and ethnic cleansing.

This report articulates the main findings from the workshop, including recommendations to further enhance the understanding and implementation of practical measures across these agendas.

II. The Point of Departure: Common R2P Risk Factors Facing the Region

The workshop introduced participants to R2P crimes and two early warning frameworks that can help development practitioners to identify risk factors and indicators for atrocity crimes, the underlying processes and relevant actors.³ In the discussion, participants used practical examples/scenarios in applying the frameworks to identify key issues facing individual countries in the region. It was noted that, when conducting the documentation and assessment necessary for identifying the risk for atrocity crimes, one must consider factors such as the motives and drivers that influence perpetrators; what means are available to commit atrocity crimes; who the targeted victim groups are; what third party actors may influence the commission or prevention of crimes; what societal, institutional, and other resiliencies may be in place; and what triggering events may increase risk. Following the completion of an assessment, it is critical to ensure that it reaches those who are best placed to analyze the gathered information, develop and operationalize relevant policy, and monitor implementation.

While each country is complex and unique, there are common issues that were articulated as affecting states throughout East Africa. These include, but are not limited to: youth bulge, with the majority of citizens below the age of 30 years; high unemployment, particularly among youth; presence of militant groups; high number of accessible small arms and light weapons; past histories of conflict and/or atrocity crimes; cycles of discrimination and favoritism based on ethnic, political, or other identities; and the violation of the rights of women and girls, including through the commission of atrocity crimes towards these populations.

III. The Main Idea of the Workshop: *Realizing* the Linkages between Atrocity Prevention/R2P and Development Cooperation

The workshop set out to highlight the links between atrocity prevention/R2P and development cooperation. Within the R2P community, these links are often declared commonplaces – but little has been done to elaborate them or to translate them into practice. The workshop aimed to change this and looked both at the prevention of atrocity crimes, potential development cooperation means to respond to atrocity crimes and the role of development actors after R2P crimes have been committed (“prevent – respond – recover”).

At the outset participants agreed that the commission of atrocity crimes is the antithesis of development, making such efforts impossible and setting a country back economically,

³ For more information see the *UN Framework of Analysis for the Prevention of Atrocity Crimes* (http://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/adviser/pdf/framework%20of%20analysis%20for%20atrocities%20crimes_en.pdf) and the *Mass Atrocities Assessment Framework* developed by the US Government (<http://www.state.gov/j/cso/241116.htm>).

socially, and politically. Moreover, upon examination of the risk factors and indicators for atrocity crimes, it is evident that there is a clear link between the work being undertaken by development practitioners and the building of state resiliency for the prevention of such crimes. This shows in various areas of development cooperation such as good governance, rule of law, security sector reform and sustainable growth.

In regard to the concept underlying R2P, development programs are highly relevant when considering the first and second pillars of R2P, i.e. the primary responsibility of the state to protect its population and the role of the international community to provide assistance to uphold those obligations, respectively. State initiatives to strengthen national architecture for atrocity prevention, as well as external support to enhance capacity to protect civilians against atrocity crimes, are therefore entry points for development actors to contribute towards the implementation of R2P.

Finally, development practitioners working in the field can serve as key actors in monitoring emerging risks through their own documentation as well as through engaging with local actors. By sharing such information with relevant stakeholders, and if trained on atrocity prevention risk factors, development practitioners and their counterparts can contribute towards raising awareness needed to take early, preventive and specific action.

IV. Challenges for Linking Development Cooperation and Atrocity Prevention/R2P

In the field, practitioners can meet a range of challenges when seeking to realize the links between atrocity prevention and development cooperation. The workshop participants identified and discussed a number of these including financial and other resource constraints; the technical and political divide; the challenge of safely collecting and sharing relevant information; the hesitance to label potential issues as “atrocity crimes;” and the question of whether adding an R2P lens indeed changes the outcome of development cooperation compared to working under a conflict prevention framework.

Participants agreed that any attempt to integrate R2P into development cooperation has to be mindful of existing resources and requires a case-based as well as context-specific approach. In addition, atrocity prevention efforts do not always need to refer to R2P as such if in the given scenario the label only creates or adds political controversy. In regard to conflict prevention, there is a considerable overlap to atrocity prevention, but in certain scenarios the R2P lens can provide important pointers which issues to prioritize and to address. This is the more so, as R2P includes atrocity crimes committed outside conflict and also entails a specific focus on particularly vulnerable groups within the population.

In addition, participants stated that it is necessary to integrate atrocity prevention into development programming both in capitals and in the field. This includes being able to identify relevant information in the field and to respond in capitals efficiently to the potential risks that have been identified. Participants recalled the importance of learning from experience where atrocities could have been avoided if the identified potential risks were timely responded to.

V. Recommendations for the Way Forward

Looking ahead, participants articulated a range of recommendations that can be taken forward as stakeholders seek to further embed an “atrocities prevention lens” within development policies and programming while heeding the ‘do not harm’ approach.

- *Consider and act on the implications of atrocities prevention for existing and future development cooperation programming:* R2P has been agreed by all UN member states, and atrocities crimes can occur anywhere. If an atrocities risk analysis indicates that a given country faces significant issues, development actors should examine their existing programming and reflect on future initiatives in light of this assessment to assess whether they sufficiently address atrocities prevention needs.
- *Increase programming that focuses on addressing root causes of future atrocities crimes:* While the typical goal of development programming is to implement long-term initiatives that contribute to the general betterment of society, atrocities prevention requires to think atrocities crimes together with root causes – this means to explore the underlying causes of conflict and tension in a given society, in particular after a war or other humanitarian emergencies; this will contribute towards the development of sustainable peace and thus support societal and government capacity for atrocities prevention. This also means that efforts to integrate R2P into development cooperation have to reach beyond human rights and rule of law programs and include sectors such as growth, health and agriculture.
- *Adjust development cooperation processes to allow for timely and flexible responses to atrocities risks:* As development actors may find themselves supporting or directly implementing programs in situations that can become unstable and potentially ripe for atrocities crimes, it is critical that policies and programming provide the flexibility that is needed to address the changing needs of populations. This may include altering programs themselves, or reallocating or dedicating funds to address emerging R2P needs.
- *Integrate an “atrocities prevention lens” within programming assessments and evaluations:* Many development actors use “checklists” in order to assess how a program considers and affects/contributes towards key issues such as human rights protection and gender inclusivity. For the future, development actors should integrate atrocities prevention risk factors into these assessment processes to ensure that their programming does not increase atrocities risks in the country and contributes towards building state resiliency for the prevention of atrocities crimes.
- *Support human rights mechanisms and documentation processes as avenues for atrocities risk assessment:* Development actors should consider projects that contribute towards the establishment or strengthening of local, national, and regional human rights mechanisms that can document and monitor human rights issues which serve as early warning signs of potential R2P crimes. Additionally, supporting civil society and other actors documenting human rights violations, including protection of activists and security for witnesses involved in legal

proceedings, will enable such actors to make atrocity risk assessments and contribute towards accountability.

- *Support and facilitate dialogue, mediation, and reconciliation processes, where possible and appropriate:* In some settings, particularly those where all or most actors involved have grievances or an interest at stake, development actors may be able to assist in the facilitation or support of processes to promote dialogue and peaceful settlement of disputes. Development actors could also assist in convening stakeholders to consider and address an issue impacting their locality, for example the spread of illicit arms, that may be overly sensitive to the parties involved and thus require external support.
- *Localize development programming, including through direct partnerships with local organizations and actors:* Through increasing local engagements and partnerships, development actors will be able to enhance their understanding of key R2P issues and indicators of risk for atrocity crimes; establish holistic programming priorities that take into account the immediate as well as long-term needs of affected populations; and establish more sustainable projects that, through cooperation with local actors, will empower country-based partners and strengthen the early warning capacities of development cooperation.
- *Cooperate locally with international partners on atrocity prevention:* R2P has been agreed by all UN member states and its second pillar concerning the international responsibility to assist with national atrocity prevention applies to all member states. Joint efforts by development partners will help to strengthen the national resilience against atrocity crimes. Such efforts should also engage as appropriate the relevant UN agencies in the given country, as the UN's *Human Rights Up Front* initiative pursues a similar agenda of preventing massive human rights violations.

VI. Evaluation of the Workshop and Next Steps

More than 70% of the participants provided after the workshop detailed and very positive feedback through an anonymous online survey. All respondents characterized the workshop as useful and relevant, and 86% stated they would recommend colleagues to attend this workshop in the future. In addition, after the workshop almost all participants, including the development practitioners, agreed that their own work is relevant or highly relevant to the field of atrocity prevention. This constituted a significant shift to the pre-workshop assessment and underscores that the links between R2P and development cooperation need to be spelt out and exemplified with concrete examples in order to resonate. Most importantly, 95% of the respondents declared they would apply the information obtained at the workshop in their work with many listing concrete ideas.

The Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and USAID, assisted by the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect, will follow up with the workshop participants to learn more about the usefulness of this pilot workshop. They will also share this report from the Kampala workshop with relevant stakeholders to encourage others to discuss these matters. Moreover, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and USAID will examine how to integrate the main findings into their own work with development cooperation and atrocity

prevention and whether to build on the Kampala experience by organizing a similar workshop in another region in 2017.

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Annex

The Role of Atrocity Prevention and Responsibility to Protect (R2P) in Development Cooperation 22-23 March 2016 Speke Munyonyo; Kampala, Uganda

Day 1, Tuesday 22 March

8:30	<p>Welcome and Introduction</p> <p>Opening remarks by the Ambassador of Denmark Mogens Pedersen and the USAID Uganda Mission Director Leslie Reed</p> <p>Introduction by Nicole Widdersheim and Tomas Kønigsfeldt on behalf of the organizers</p>
9:00	<p>“You Just Have to Keep Going”</p> <p>Facilitator: Mark Goldenbaum + Megan Schmidt</p> <p>This session will begin with a short clip of a documentary film, <i>I’m Not Leaving</i>, featuring the experience of Carl Wilkens, a development professional, through the 1994 Rwandan genocide.</p> <p>This will be followed by a facilitated discussion of the challenges that mass atrocities pose to development and the potential and varied roles of development actors in addressing mass atrocities. In the course of this segment participants will introduce themselves and their work, and speak about how their work relates to atrocity prevention.</p>
10:30	<p>Group Photo and Coffee Break</p>
11:15	<p>R2P and Mass Atrocities</p> <p>Presenter: Martin Mennecke</p> <p>This session will introduce the concepts of mass atrocities and R2P, including related initiatives such as Human Rights Up Front, as well as speak about the work of various actors to operationalize the concepts. There will also be an overview of the different phases relevant to mass atrocities, i.e. prevention,</p>

	response and recovery, followed by discussion.
12:30	<p>Lunch Speaker: Political Context of Mass Atrocities and R2P</p> <p>Moderator: Nicole Widdersheim</p> <p>Speaker: Ambassador Liberata Mulamula, Tanzania</p>
14:00	<p>Assessing Risks of Mass Atrocities</p> <p>Presenters: Annie Bird and Martin Mennecke</p> <p>Speakers will introduce two frameworks for assessing potential or ongoing mass atrocities: the UN Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes and the U.S. State-USAID Atrocity Analysis Framework. This will include a discussion of risk factors and indicators for atrocities, and other relevant issues. In small groups, participants will apply the frameworks to their respective country cases.</p>
15:30	Coffee Break
16:00	<p>Presentation of <i>USAID Field Guide: Helping to Prevent Mass Atrocities</i></p> <p>Presenter: Nicole Widdersheim</p> <p>This session will introduce some general concepts and principles of sustainable development (i.e. Do No Harm) and describe USAID's approach to understanding and addressing the challenge of mass atrocities, as encapsulated in this publication designed to provide practical guidance to its field officers.</p>
17:00	Wrap-up of Day 1
17:45	<p>Joint Dinner and Boat Cruise</p> <p>Location TBC</p>

Day 2, Wednesday 23 March

8:30	Welcome and Review of Day 1
8:45	Atrocity Prevention and Development Cooperation: Sharing Experiences (part 1)

	<p>Facilitator: Nicole Widdersheim</p> <p>This session will start with a short video clip of USAID field officers talking of their experience in atrocity risk situations, followed by a panel of development practitioners and donors sharing their responses.</p> <p>Questions to consider include: What are the challenges for atrocity prevention through development cooperation? What can be done to address them?</p> <p>Participants will seek to identify challenges and differences in cases of relative success and failure.</p>
10:15	Coffee break
10:45	<p>Atrocity Prevention and Development Cooperation: Sharing Experiences (part 2)</p> <p>Facilitator: Donald Deya</p> <p>Speakers: Florence Batoni, Never Again Rwanda; Harriet Atim, Mercy Corps; Hassan Shire, East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project; Ashad Sentongo, Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation</p> <p>In this session civil society representatives will reflect on their experiences from working on various aspects of atrocity prevention. The focus will be on highlighting lessons learnt from interacting with donors, and participants will consider the following questions: what works well regarding atrocity prevention? What can donors do better? Are donors missing out on important early warning signs?</p>
12:00	<p>Lunch Speaker: The Experience of West Africa with Linking R2P, Prevention and Development Cooperation – Success Stories and Remaining Challenges</p> <p>Moderator: Martin Mennecke</p> <p>Speaker: Ambassador William Awinador Kanyirige, High Commissioner of Ghana to Nigeria and Ghana’s Permanent Representative to ECOWAS</p>
13:30	<p>Connecting the Dots in Practice: Tomorrow’s Examples of Atrocity Prevention through Development Cooperation (part 1)</p> <p>Facilitators: Nicole Widdersheim and Martin Mennecke</p> <p>Participants will be divided into small groups to discuss future programming options in their country considering the three phases of prevention, response, and support recovery. The small groups will be tasked with assessing the roles of various actors/sectors including, but not limited to the ones listed below, with the</p>

	<p>goal of identifying concrete programming options to be taken forward:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The role of media and civil society o Community Stabilization and conflict mitigation activities o Justice sector and Security sector reform o Dealing with the past – accountability, reconciliation, reparation and other recovery measures <p>The discussion should reflect the real life challenges various actors face within their organization. Participants will be encouraged to share, as comfortable, examples of addressing such challenges, as well as consider new means to overcome the identified constraints. This session seeks to articulate advice and recommendations that participants can take forward in 2016 and beyond. “Guiding questions” will be shared with the small groups to assist in the discussions.</p>
15:00	<p>Coffee Break</p>
15:30	<p>Connecting the Dots in Practice: Tomorrow’s Examples of Atrocity Prevention through Development Cooperation (part 2)</p> <p>Facilitators: Nicole Widdersheim and Martin Mennecke</p> <p>Participants will come back to the plenary to present and discuss the programming options identified in the small group sessions.</p>
17:00	<p>Wrap-up: What we have learnt? How to move forward? Presentation of follow up initiatives</p> <p>Tomas Kønigsfeldt and Nicole Widdersheim</p>